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Yamazaki

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(54) **SPUTTERING TARGET AND METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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C23C 14/08 (2006.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **C23C 14/3414** (2013.01); **C23C 14/081** (2013.01); **C23C 14/086** (2013.01); **H01L 21/02565** (2013.01); **H01L 21/02631** (2013.01);

(Continued)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC C23C 14/086; C23C 14/3414; C23C 14/081; H01L 29/66742; H01L 29/66969; H01L 21/02565; H01L 21/02631; H01L 29/7869
See application file for complete search history.

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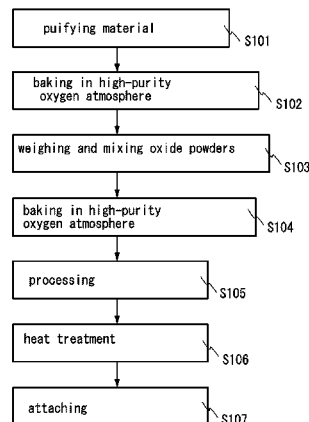
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An object is to provide a deposition technique for depositing an oxide semiconductor film. Another object is to provide a method for manufacturing a highly reliable semiconductor element using the oxide semiconductor film. A novel sputtering target obtained by removing an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal, and hydrogen that are impurities in a sputtering target used for deposition is used, whereby an oxide semiconductor film containing a small amount of those impurities can be deposited.

14 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1

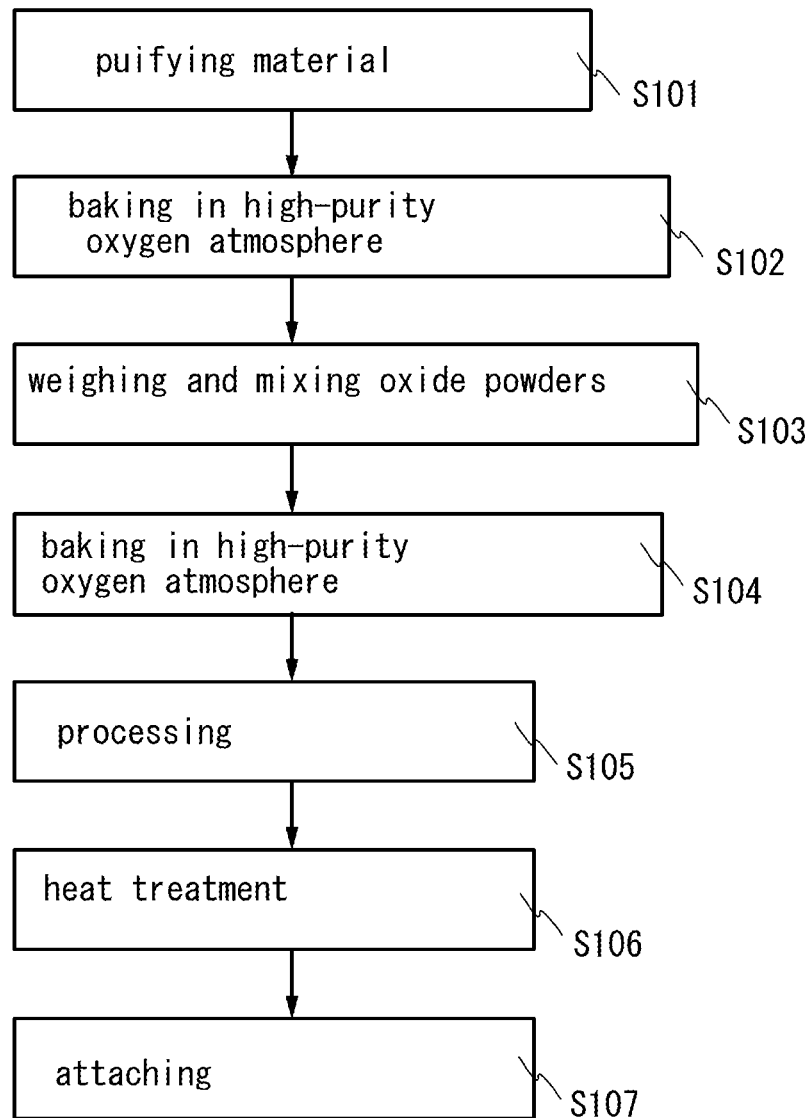


FIG. 2A

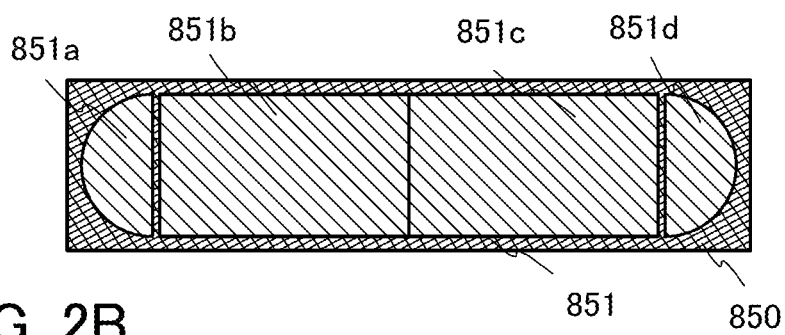


FIG. 2B

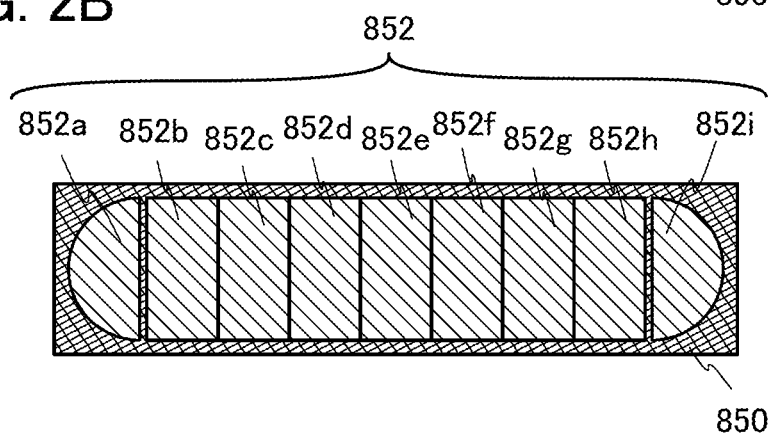


FIG. 3A

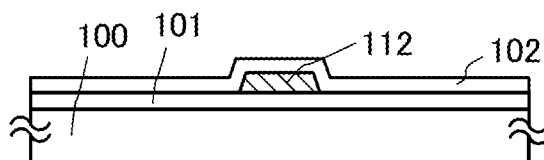


FIG. 3B

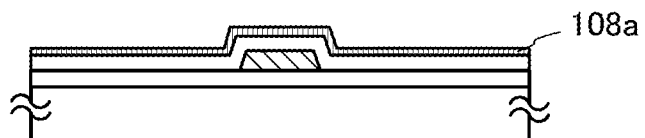


FIG. 3C

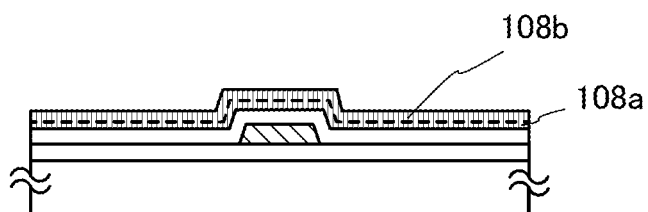


FIG. 3D

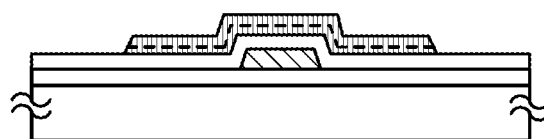
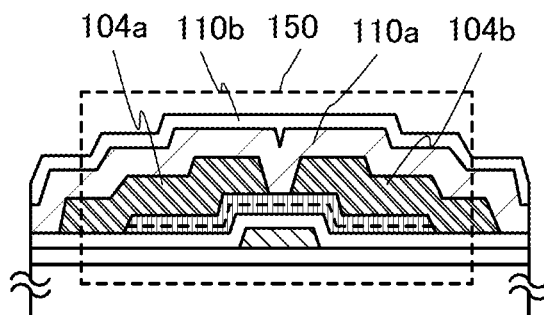


FIG. 3E



SPUTTERING TARGET AND METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 14/474,365, filed Sep. 2, 2014, now allowed, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 13/221,252, filed Aug. 30, 2011, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,835,214, which claims the benefit of a foreign priority application filed in Japan as Serial No. 2010-197509 on Sep. 3, 2010, all of which are incorporated by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a sputtering target and a method for manufacturing the sputtering target. Further, the present invention relates to a method for manufacturing a semiconductor device which is manufactured with the use of the sputtering target and uses an oxide semiconductor.

In this specification, a semiconductor device means a general device which can function by utilizing semiconductor characteristics, and an electro-optic device, a semiconductor circuit, and an electronic device are all semiconductor devices.

BACKGROUND ART

A transistor formed over a flat plate such as a glass substrate, which is typically used in a liquid crystal display device, is generally formed using a semiconductor material such as amorphous silicon or polycrystalline silicon. A transistor manufactured using amorphous silicon has low field effect mobility, but can be formed over a larger glass substrate. In contrast, a transistor manufactured using polycrystalline silicon has high field effect mobility, but needs a crystallization step such as laser annealing and is not always suitable for a larger glass substrate.

Thus, a technique in which a transistor is manufactured using an oxide semiconductor as a semiconductor material and applied to an electronic device or an optical device has attracted attention. For example, Patent Document 1 and Patent Document 2 disclose a technique by which a transistor is formed using zinc oxide or an In—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor as a semiconductor material and such a transistor is used as a switching element or the like of an image display device.

A transistor in which a channel formation region (also referred to as a channel region) is provided in an oxide semiconductor can have higher field effect mobility than a transistor using amorphous silicon. An oxide semiconductor film can be formed by a sputtering method or the like at a relatively low temperature. Its manufacturing process is easier than that of a transistor using polycrystalline silicon.

Transistors which are formed using such an oxide semiconductor over a glass substrate, a plastic substrate, or the like are expected to be applied to display devices such as a liquid crystal display, an electroluminescent display (also referred to as an EL display), and electronic paper.

REFERENCE

[Patent Document 1] Japanese Published Patent Application No. 2007-123861

[Patent Document 2] Japanese Published Patent Application No. 2007-96055

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

However, characteristics of a semiconductor element which is manufactured using an oxide semiconductor are not yet sufficient. For example, controlled threshold voltage, high operation speed, and sufficient reliability are required for a transistor including an oxide semiconductor film.

An object of one embodiment of the present invention is to provide a deposition technique for forming an oxide semiconductor film. In addition, an object of one embodiment of the present invention is to provide a method for manufacturing a highly reliable semiconductor element using the oxide semiconductor film.

The density of carriers in an oxide semiconductor film has influence on the threshold voltage of a transistor including the oxide semiconductor. The carriers in the oxide semiconductor film are generated due to impurities contained in the oxide semiconductor film. For example, impurities such as a compound containing a hydrogen atom typified by H_2O , a compound containing an alkali metal, or a compound containing an alkaline earth metal contained in the deposited oxide semiconductor film increase the carrier density of the oxide semiconductor film.

In order to achieve the above objects, impurities contained in the oxide semiconductor film which have influence on the carrier density, for example, a compound containing a hydrogen atom typified by H_2O , a compound containing an alkali metal, or a compound containing an alkaline earth metal may be removed. Specifically, a novel sputtering target obtained by removing an alkali metal, an alkaline earth metal, and hydrogen that are impurities in a sputtering target used for deposition is used, whereby an oxide semiconductor film containing a small amount of those impurities can be deposited.

A sputtering target of one embodiment of the present invention is a sputtering target for forming an oxide semiconductor film and includes a sintered body of at least one oxide selected from zinc oxide, aluminum oxide, gallium oxide, indium oxide, and tin oxide. When observed by SIMS, the concentration of each of alkali metals contained in the sintered body is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. Further, when observed by SIMS, the concentration of hydrogen contained in the sintered body is $1 \times 10^{19} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{18} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, more preferably lower than $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$.

More specifically, the concentration of sodium (Na) observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, more preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. The concentration of lithium (Li) observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. The concentration of potassium (K) observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

It has been pointed out that an oxide semiconductor is insensitive to impurities, there is no problem when a considerable amount of metal impurities is contained in the film, and therefore, soda-lime glass which contains a large amount of an alkali metal such as sodium and is inexpensive can also be used (Kamiya, Nomura, and Hosono, "Carrier Transport Properties and Electronic Structures of Amorphous Oxide Semiconductors: The present status", *KOTAI BUTSURI (SOLID STATE PHYSICS)*, 2009, Vol. 44, pp. 621-633). But such consideration is not appropriate.

An alkali metal and an alkaline earth metal are adverse impurities for a transistor using an oxide semiconductor layer and are preferably contained as little as possible. An alkali

metal, in particular, Na diffuses into an oxide and becomes Na^+ when an insulating film in contact with the oxide semiconductor layer is an oxide. In addition, Na cuts a bond between metal and oxygen or enters the bond in the oxide semiconductor layer. As a result, transistor characteristics deteriorate (e.g., the transistor becomes normally-on (the shift of threshold voltage to a negative side) or the mobility is decreased). In addition, this also causes variation in the characteristics. Such a problem is significant especially in the case where the hydrogen concentration in the oxide semiconductor layer is sufficiently low. Thus, the concentration of an alkali metal is required to be set to the above value in the case where the concentration of hydrogen in the oxide semiconductor layer is $5 \times 10^{19} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, particularly $5 \times 10^{18} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

Note that in this specification, a measurement value obtained by secondary ion mass spectrometry (SIMS) is used as the impurity concentration in the sputtering target or the oxide semiconductor film. It is known that it is difficult to obtain accurate data in the proximity of a surface of a sample or in the proximity of an interface between stacked films formed using different materials by the SIMS analysis in principle. Thus, in the case where distributions of the impurity concentrations in the films in thickness directions are analyzed by SIMS, the smallest value in a region where the films are provided, the value is not greatly changed, and almost constant level of strength can be obtained is employed as the impurity concentration. Further, in the case where the thickness of the film is small, a region where almost constant level of strength can be obtained cannot be found in some cases due to the influence of the impurity concentration in the films adjacent to each other. In this case, the smallest value of the impurity concentration in a region where the films are provided is employed as the impurity concentration in the film.

In one embodiment of the present invention, a sputtering target containing a small amount of impurities such as a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal, and an alkaline earth metal can be provided. An oxide semiconductor film in which impurities are reduced can be formed using the sputtering target. A method for manufacturing a highly reliable semiconductor element including the oxide semiconductor film containing a small amount of impurities can be provided.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings:

FIG. 1 is a flow chart illustrating a method for manufacturing a sputtering target;

FIGS. 2A and 2B are top views illustrating a sputtering target; and

FIGS. 3A to 3E are cross-sectional views illustrating an example of a method for manufacturing a transistor.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

An embodiment of the present invention will be described in detail below with reference to drawings. Note that the present invention is not limited to the following description and it will be easily understood by those skilled in the art that modes and details can be modified in various ways. In addition, the present invention is not construed as being limited to description of the embodiment.

Embodiment 1

In this embodiment, a method for manufacturing a sputtering target which is one embodiment of the present invention

will be described with reference to FIG. 1. FIG. 1 is a flow chart illustrating an example of a method for manufacturing a sputtering target according to this embodiment.

First, plural kinds of single metals (Zn, In, Al, Sn, and the like) that are materials of the sputtering target are each purified by repeating distillation, sublimation, or recrystallization (S101). After that, purified metals are each processed into a powder form. Note that in the case of using Ga or Si as the material of the sputtering target, a single crystal is obtained by a zone melt method or a Czochralski method and then processing into a powder form is performed. Then, each of the sputtering target materials is baked in a high-purity oxygen atmosphere so as to be oxidized (S102). Subsequently, each of the oxide powders is weighed as appropriate, and the weighed oxide powders are mixed (S103).

The purity of the high-purity oxygen atmosphere is, for example, 6N (99.9999%) or higher, preferably 7N (99.99999%) or higher (i.e., the concentration of impurities is 1 ppm or lower, preferably 0.1 ppm or lower).

In this embodiment, a sputtering target for an In—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor is to be manufactured. For example, In_2O_3 , Ga_2O_3 , and ZnO are weighed so that the composition ratio of $\text{In}_2\text{O}_3:\text{Ga}_2\text{O}_3:\text{ZnO}$ is 1:1:1 [molar ratio].

As examples of the sputtering target for an oxide semiconductor which is manufactured in this embodiment, without being limited to a sputtering target for an In—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, the following can be given: a sputtering target for an In—Sn—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an In—Sn—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an In—Al—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for a Sn—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an Al—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for a Sn—Al—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an In—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for a Sn—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an Al—Zn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for an In-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for a Sn-based oxide semiconductor, a sputtering target for a Zn-based oxide semiconductor, and the like.

Next, the mixture is shaped into a predetermined shape and baked, whereby a sintered body of the metal oxide is obtained (S104). By baking the sputtering target material, hydrogen, moisture, hydrocarbon, and the like can be prevented from being mixed into the sputtering target. The baking can be performed in an inert gas atmosphere (a nitrogen atmosphere or a rare gas atmosphere), in vacuum, or in a high-pressure atmosphere, and further, may be performed with application of mechanical pressure. As a baking method, an atmospheric sintering method, a pressure sintering method, or the like can be used as appropriate. As the pressure sintering method, a hot pressing method, a hot isostatic pressing (HIP) method, a discharge plasma sintering method, or an impact method is preferably used. Although the maximum temperature at which baking is performed is selected depending on the sintering temperature of the sputtering target material, it is preferably set to approximately 1000°C . to 2000°C ., or more preferably, 1200°C . to 1500°C . Although the holding time of the maximum temperature is selected depending on the sputtering target material, 0.5 hours to 3 hours is preferable.

Note that the filling rate of the sputtering target for an oxide semiconductor in this embodiment is preferably higher than or equal to 90% and lower than or equal to 100%, or more preferably, higher than or equal to 95% and lower than or equal to 99.9% inclusive.

Next, mechanical processing is performed in order to form a sputtering target having desired dimensions, a desired

shape, and desired surface roughness (S105). As a processing means, for example, mechanical polishing, chemical mechanical polishing (CMP), or a combination of these can be used.

Then, in order to remove minute dust generated by the mechanical processing and components of a grinding solution, the sputtering target may be cleaned. Note that, in the case where the sputtering target is cleaned by ultrasonic cleaning in which the target is soaked in water or an organic solvent, cleaning with running water, or the like, it is preferable that heat treatment be subsequently performed for sufficiently reducing the concentration of hydrogen in the target or on a surface thereof.

Then, heat treatment is performed on the sputtering target (S106). The heat treatment is preferably performed in an inert gas atmosphere (a nitrogen atmosphere or a rare gas atmosphere). Although the temperature of the heat treatment differs depending on the sputtering target material, it is set to a temperature at which the sputtering target is not changed in property. Specifically, the temperature is higher than or equal to 150° C. and lower than or equal to 750° C., preferably, higher than or equal to 425° C. and lower than or equal to 750° C. Heating time is, specifically, 0.5 hours or longer, preferably, for an hour or longer. The heat treatment may be performed in vacuum or in a high-pressure atmosphere.

After that, the sputtering target is attached to a metal plate called a backing plate (S107). A backing plate has functions of cooling the sputtering target material and being a sputtering electrode and thus is preferably formed using copper, which is excellent in thermal conductivity and electric conductivity. Alternatively, titanium, a copper alloy, a stainless steel alloy, or the like can be used other than copper.

Further, at the time of attaching the sputtering target to the backing plate, the sputtering target may be divided and attached to one backing plate. FIGS. 2A and 2B illustrate examples in which the sputtering target is divided and attached (bonded) to one backing plate.

FIG. 2A illustrates an example in which a sputtering target 851 is divided into four pieces of sputtering targets 851a, 851b, 851c, and 851d and they are attached to a backing plate 850. FIG. 2B illustrates an example in which a sputtering target is divided to a larger number of sputtering targets; that is, a sputtering target 852 is divided into nine pieces of sputtering targets 852a, 852b, 852c, 852d, 852e, 852f, 852g, 852h, and 852i, and they are attached to the backing plate 850. Note that the number of pieces of divided sputtering targets and the shape of the target are not limited to the number and the shape in the case of FIG. 2A or FIG. 2B. When the sputtering target is divided, warpage of the sputtering target can be relaxed in the attachment of the sputtering target to the backing plate. In particular, when a film is formed over a large substrate, such divided sputtering targets can be suitably used for a sputtering target which is upsized in accordance with the size of the large substrate. Needless to say, one sputtering target may be attached to one backing plate.

It is preferable that the sputtering target which has been subjected to the heat treatment be transferred, stored, and the like in a high-purity oxygen gas atmosphere, a high-purity N₂O gas atmosphere, or an ultra dry air (having a dew point of -40° C. or lower, preferably -60° C. or lower) atmosphere, in order to prevent entry of impurities such as moisture, hydrogen, or an alkali metal. The target may be covered with a protective material formed of a material with low water permeability such as a stainless steel alloy, and the above gas may be introduced into a gap between the protective material and the target. It is preferable that the oxygen gas and the N₂O gas do not contain water, hydrogen, and the like. Alternatively,

the purity of an oxygen gas or a N₂O gas is preferably 6N (99.9999%) or higher, more preferably 7N (99.99999%) or higher (that is, the impurity concentration in the oxygen gas or the N₂O gas is 1 ppm or lower, preferably 0.1 ppm or lower).

Through the above process, the sputtering target described in this embodiment can be manufactured. The sputtering target in this embodiment can contain a small amount of impurities by using the materials each of which is purified to have high purity in the manufacturing process. Further, the concentration of impurities contained in the oxide semiconductor film which is formed using the target can also be reduced.

The above-described manufacture of the sputtering target is preferably conducted in an inert gas atmosphere (a nitrogen atmosphere or a rare gas atmosphere) without exposure to air.

Similarly, the sputtering target is set in a sputtering apparatus in an inert gas atmosphere (a nitrogen atmosphere or a rare gas atmosphere) without exposure to air. Accordingly, hydrogen, moisture, an alkali metal, or the like can be prevented from attaching to the sputtering target.

In addition, after the sputtering target is set in the sputtering apparatus, dehydrogenation treatment is preferably performed to remove hydrogen which remains on a surface of or inside the target material. As the dehydrogenation treatment, a method in which the inside of the film formation chamber is heated to 200° C. to 600° C. under reduced pressure, a method in which introduction and removal of nitrogen or an inert gas are repeated while the inside of the film formation chamber is heated, and the like can be given.

Moreover, in the sputtering apparatus in which the sputtering target is set, it is preferable that the leakage rate be set to 1×10^{-10} Pa·m³/sec or lower, entry of water as an impurity be reduced with the use of, specifically, a cryopump as an evacuation unit, and counter flow be also prevented.

With reference to FIGS. 3A to 3E, an example will be described below in which a transistor is manufactured with the use of a sputtering apparatus in which a sputtering target manufactured in the above-described process is set. Also in a manufacturing process of the transistor, it is preferable that impurities such as a compound containing a hydrogen atom typified by H₂O, a compound containing an alkali metal, and a compound containing an alkaline earth metal be prevented from entering an oxide semiconductor film formed in the sputtering apparatus.

First, a conductive film is formed over a substrate 100 having an insulating surface, and then, a gate electrode layer 112 is formed through a first photolithography process and an etching step.

An insulating film serving as a base film may be formed between the substrate 100 and the gate electrode layer 112; in this embodiment, a base film 101 is provided. The base film 101 has a function of preventing diffusion of impurity elements (e.g., Na) from the substrate 100 and can be formed from a film selected from a silicon oxide film, a silicon oxynitride film, a silicon nitride film, a hafnium oxide film, an aluminum oxide film, a gallium oxide film, and a gallium aluminum oxide (Ga_xAl_{2-x}O_{3+y}, (where x is greater than or equal to 0 and less than or equal to 2, and y is greater than 0 and less than 1)) film. By provision of the base film 101, impurity elements (e.g., Na) from the substrate 100 can be prevented from diffusing into an oxide semiconductor film that is formed later. The structure of the base film is not limited to a single-layer structure, and may be a layered structure of a plurality of the above films.

Then, a gate insulating layer 102 is formed over the gate electrode layer 112 by a sputtering method or a PCVD method (see FIG. 3A). Also at the time of formation of the

gate insulating layer **102**, it is preferable that entry of impurities such as a compound containing an alkali metal and a compound containing an alkaline earth metal be prevented, and the gate insulating layer **102** is formed without exposure to air after the base film **101** is formed.

Then, after the gate insulating layer **102** is formed, a first oxide semiconductor film having a thickness of greater than or equal to 1 nm and less than or equal to 10 nm is formed over the gate insulating layer **102** by a sputtering method without exposure to air. In this embodiment, the first oxide semiconductor film is formed to a thickness of 5 nm in an oxygen atmosphere, an argon atmosphere, or a mixed atmosphere of argon and oxygen under conditions where a target for an oxide semiconductor (a target for an In—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor containing In₂O₃, Ga₂O₃, and ZnO at 1:1:2 [molar ratio]) is used, the distance between the substrate and the target is 170 mm, the substrate temperature is 250° C., the pressure is 0.4 Pa, and the direct current (DC) power source is 0.5 kW. The target for an oxide semiconductor includes a sintered body of at least one oxide selected from zinc oxide, aluminum oxide, gallium oxide, indium oxide, and tin oxide, and the concentration of each of alkali metals contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of Na contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, further preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of Li contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of K contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

After the first oxide semiconductor film is formed, without exposure to air, first heat treatment is performed by setting an atmosphere where the substrate is placed to a nitrogen atmosphere or dry air. The temperature of the first heat treatment is higher than or equal to 400° C. and lower than or equal to 750° C. In addition, heating time of the first heat treatment is longer than or equal to one minute and shorter than or equal to 24 hours. By the first heat treatment, a first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** is formed (see FIG. 3B).

Subsequently, after the first heat treatment, without exposure to air, a second oxide semiconductor film having a thickness greater than 10 nm is formed over the first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** by a sputtering method. In this embodiment, the second oxide semiconductor film is formed to a thickness of 25 nm in an oxygen atmosphere, an argon atmosphere, or a mixed atmosphere of argon and oxygen under conditions where a target for an oxide semiconductor (a target for an In—Ga—Zn-based oxide semiconductor containing In₂O₃, Ga₂O₃, and ZnO at 1:1:2 [molar ratio]) is used, the distance between the substrate and the target is 170 mm, the substrate temperature is 400° C., the pressure is 0.4 Pa, and the direct current (DC) power source is 0.5 kW. The target for an oxide semiconductor includes a sintered body of at least one oxide selected from zinc oxide, aluminum oxide, gallium oxide, indium oxide, and tin oxide, and the concentration of each of alkali metals contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of Na contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, further preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of Li contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In addition, the concentration of K contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

Note that it is preferable that entry of impurities such as a compound containing a hydrogen atom typified by H₂O, a compound containing an alkali metal, and a compound containing an alkaline earth metal be prevented at the time of deposition of the first oxide semiconductor film and the second oxide semiconductor film. Specifically, the distance (also called a TS distance) between the substrate and the target is made large, in which case a high-mass impurity element is eliminated and entry thereof at the time of deposition is reduced; alternatively, the film formation chamber is set to a high vacuum state, in which case H₂O or the like which is attached to the substrate is evaporated from a surface on which the film is formed. Further, it is preferable that impurities such as a compound containing a hydrogen atom typified by H₂O, a compound containing an alkali metal, and a compound containing an alkaline earth metal be prevented from entering the oxide semiconductor film by setting the substrate temperature at the time of deposition to higher than or equal to 250° C. and lower than or equal to 450° C.

After the second oxide semiconductor film is formed, without exposure to air, second heat treatment is performed by setting an atmosphere where the substrate is placed to a nitrogen atmosphere or dry air. The temperature of the second heat treatment is higher than or equal to 400° C. and lower than or equal to 750° C. In addition, heating time of the second heat treatment is longer than or equal to one minute and shorter than or equal to 24 hours. By the second heat treatment, a second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b** is formed (see FIG. 3C).

Then, an oxide semiconductor stack of the first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** and the second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b** is processed into an island-shaped oxide semiconductor stack (see FIG. 3D).

The oxide semiconductor stack can be processed by etching after a mask having a desired shape is formed over the oxide semiconductor stack. The above mask can be formed by a method such as photolithography. Alternatively, a method such as an inkjet method may be used to form the mask.

For the etching of the oxide semiconductor stack, either wet etching or dry etching may be employed. It is needless to say that these may be combined.

After that, a conductive film for forming a source electrode layer and a drain electrode layer (including a wiring formed in the same layer as the source electrode layer and the drain electrode layer) is formed over the oxide semiconductor stack and is processed to form a source electrode layer **104a** and a drain electrode layer **104b**.

Next, an insulating film **110a** and an insulating film **110b** which cover the oxide semiconductor stack, the source electrode layer **104a**, and the drain electrode layer **104b** are formed (see FIG. 3E). The insulating film **110a** is formed using an oxide insulating material, and after deposition, third heat treatment is preferably performed. By the third heat treatment, oxygen is supplied from the insulating film **110a** to the oxide semiconductor stack. The third heat treatment is performed in an inert atmosphere, an oxygen atmosphere, a mixed atmosphere of oxygen and nitrogen, at a temperature higher than or equal to 200° C. and lower than or equal to 400° C., preferably higher than or equal to 250° C. and lower than or equal to 320° C. In addition, heating time of the third heat treatment is longer than or equal to one minute and shorter than or equal to 24 hours.

Through the above process, a bottom-gate transistor **150** is formed.

The transistor **150** includes the base film **101**, the gate electrode layer **112**, the gate insulating layer **102**, the oxide semiconductor stack including a channel formation region,

the source electrode layer **104a**, the drain electrode layer **104b**, and the insulating film **110a**, which are formed over the substrate **100** having the insulating surface. The source electrode layer **104a** and the drain electrode layer **104b** are provided to cover the oxide semiconductor stack. A region functioning as the channel formation region is part of the oxide semiconductor stack which overlaps with the gate electrode layer **112** with the gate insulating layer **102** interposed therebetween.

In a semiconductor layer (which refers to the above oxide semiconductor stack) including the channel formation region of the transistor **150** which is illustrated in FIG. 3E, the concentration of Na observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, further preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In the semiconductor layer including the channel formation region of the transistor **150**, the concentration of Li observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower. In the semiconductor layer including the channel formation region of the transistor **150**, the concentration of K observed by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, preferably $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

In the semiconductor layer including the channel formation region of the transistor **150** illustrated in FIG. 3E, it is preferable that the concentration of hydrogen observed by SIMS be $5 \times 10^{19} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, specifically $5 \times 10^{18} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

The semiconductor layer including the channel formation region of in the transistor **150** illustrated in FIG. 3E is a stack of the first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** and the second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b**. The first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** and the second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b** are c-axis aligned. Note that the first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** and the second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b** comprise an oxide including crystals with c-axis alignment (also referred to as C-Axis Aligned Crystal (CAAC)), which has neither a single crystal structure nor an amorphous structure. The first crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108a** and the second crystalline oxide semiconductor film **108b** partly include a crystal grain boundary and are apparently different from an amorphous oxide semiconductor film.

In the case of the transistor including a stack of a first crystalline oxide semiconductor film and a second crystalline oxide semiconductor film, the amount of change in threshold voltage of the transistor between before and after a bias-temperature (BT) stress test can be reduced even when the transistor is irradiated with light; thus, such a transistor has stable electric characteristics.

Note that although an example of a bottom-gate transistor is illustrated in FIGS. 3A to 3E, the present invention is not limited thereto and a top-gate transistor can also be manufactured, for example.

REFERENCE NUMERALS

100: substrate, **101**: base film, **102**: gate insulating layer, **104a**: source electrode layer, **104b**: drain electrode layer, **108a**: first crystalline oxide semiconductor film, **108b**: second crystalline oxide semiconductor film, **110a**: insulating film, **110b**: insulating film, **112**: gate electrode layer, **150**: transistor, **850**: backing plate, **851**: sputtering target, **851a**: sputtering target, **851b**: sputtering target, **851c**: sputtering target, **851d**: sputtering target, **852**: sputtering target, **852a**: sputtering target, **852b**: sputtering target, **852c**: sputtering target, **852d**: sputtering target, **852e**: sputtering target, **852f**:

sputtering target, **852g**: sputtering target, **852h**: sputtering target, and **852i**: sputtering target

This application is based on Japanese Patent Application serial no. 2010-197509 filed with Japan Patent Office on Sep. 3, 2010, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

The invention claimed is:

1. A sputtering target for forming an oxide semiconductor film, comprising:

a sintered body of at least one oxide selected from zinc oxide, aluminum oxide, gallium oxide, indium oxide, and tin oxide,

wherein heat treatment is performed on the sputtering target at a temperature higher than or equal to 425°C . and lower than or equal to 750°C . in an inert gas atmosphere, and

wherein concentration of each of alkali metals contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

2. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of sodium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

3. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of sodium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

4. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of lithium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

5. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of lithium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

6. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of potassium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

7. The sputtering target according to claim 1, wherein concentration of potassium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

8. A sputtering target for forming an oxide semiconductor film, comprising:

a sintered body of at least one oxide selected from zinc oxide, aluminum oxide, gallium oxide, indium oxide, and tin oxide,

wherein concentration of each of alkali metals contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower, wherein a filling rate of the sputtering target is higher than or equal to 95% and lower than or equal to 99.9%, and wherein concentration of hydrogen contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{-9} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

9. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of sodium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

10. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of sodium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

11. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of lithium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

12. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of lithium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

13. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of potassium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $5 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.

14. The sputtering target according to claim 8, wherein concentration of potassium contained in the sintered body by SIMS is $1 \times 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-3}$ or lower.